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Serial No. 10/651,052

Attorney Docket No. 32-001

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REMARKS

A form PTO-1449 was filed on 29 August 2003. The form PTO-1449 listed seven US patent documents. However, the office action failed to mention this form PTO-1449, and no initialed copy of this form was attached to the office action. Therefore, the applicant respectfully requests an initialed copy of the form PTO-1449 that was filed on 29 August 2003. If a copy of the form is not available to the examiner for some reason, the applicant will, upon request, send another copy. If the examiner requires, the applicant will provide a copy of a return postcard from the USPTO showing that an IDS citing seven references was filed on 29 August 2003.

Claims 1-4 and 6-18 are pending. Claim 5 has been canceled. The applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

A minor amendment has been made to several of the claims for clarification and not in response to any rejection. That is, the words "contains" has been changed to "includes" for clarification. Also, in claim 6, the word "containing" has been removed for clarification.

Claims 1-6 and 9 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Glessner '170. Claim 5 has been canceled and will not be discussed. As for claims 1-4 and 9, the applicant respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn for the following reasons.

Independent claim 1 has been amended essentially to include the limitations of original claims 5 and 6. Amended claim 1 recites that the lock plate (25) has a substantially disc shape and also has a peripheral edge, which opposes the cam surface (20) of the tang (10). The

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peripheral edge of the lock plate (25) has an arcuate lock surface (27) which is engageable with the engage portion (20b). The engage portion (20b) has an inverted arcuate shape that substantially matches the arcuate profile of the lock surface (27). The lock surface (27) engages with the engage portion (20b) when the lock plate (25) is rotated to the lock position with the blade (2) being located at the open extended position (see Fig. 10). The center of the arc of the lock surface (27) deviates from the axis of the lock plate (25).

In the knife of claim 1, the center of the arc of the lock surface (27) is deviated from the axis of the lock plate (25). Therefore, when the lock plate (25) rotates from the unlock position (Fig. 9) to the lock position (Fig. 10), the lock surface (27) approaches the engage portion (20b) gradually to engage with the engage portion (20b). More specifically, in the state where the lock plate (25) is located between the unlock position (Fig. 9) and the lock position (Fig. 10), a very small clearance is present between the lock surface (27) and the engage portion (20b). The clearance reduces gradually as the lock plate (25) approaches the lock position (Fig. 10). When the lock plate (25) reaches the lock position (Fig. 10), the clearance disappears and the lock surface (27) engages with the engage portion (20b). Therefore, the lock plate (25) rotates smoothly from the unlock position to the lock position (see paragraphs [0021] and [0033] of the publication of this application (US 2005/0044717 A1)).

Figure 8 of Glessner '170 shows a lock plate (26), which has an arcuate lock surface (28), and a tang (10), which has an engage portion (16). The arcuate lock surface (28) is engageable with the engage portion (16). The engage portion (16) has an inverted arcuate shape that substantially matches the arcuate profile of the lock surface (28). However, the publication of

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Glessner '170 fails to disclose or suggest that the arc of the lock surface has a center deviated from the axis of the lock plate. Therefore, in Glessner '170, the lock plate (26) rotates from the unlock position to the lock position with the arcuate lock surface (28) sliding the engage portion (16). Accordingly, the lock plate (26) does not rotate smoothly from the unlock position to the lock position.

In light of this information, the applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of independent claim 1 be withdrawn. Claims 2-4 and 9 depend on claim 1, directly or indirectly, and are considered to be likewise patentable for the reasons given above with respect to claim 1.

Claims 1, 11 and 17 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Moser '272. The applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn for the following reasons.

As for claims 1 and 11, the Moser publication also fails to disclose or suggest an arc of a lock surface that has a center deviated from the axis of the lock plate. Therefore, the applicant requests that the rejection of claims 1 and 11 be withdrawn.

Claim 17 is independent and has been amended in the manner of claim 1. That is, claim 17 now recites, among other things, an arc of a lock surface that has a center deviated from the axis of the lock plate. As mentioned above, the Moser publication fails to disclose or suggest this feature. Therefore, the applicants requests that the rejection of claim 17 be withdrawn.

Claims 7, 8, 10 and 12-16 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Glessner '170. The applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn for the following reasons.

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Claims 7, 8, 10, 12 and 13 depend on claim 1 and are thus considered to be in condition for allowance for the reasons given above with respect to claim 1.

Independent claim 14 has been amended to include the same limitations that were added to claim 1. In particular, Giesser '170 fails to disclose or suggest the an arc of the lock surface that has a center deviated from the axis of the lock plate. Therefore, withdrawal of the 103(a) rejections to claim 14 is respectfully requested.

Claims 15 and 16 depend on claim 14. Hence, these claims are likewise considered to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 6 has been amended based on the paragraphs [0021] and [0033] of the publication of this application (US 2005/0044717 A1)). Claim 6 now recites that the center of the arc of the lock surface is deviated from the axis of the lock plate so that, when the lock plate rotates from the unlock position to the lock position with the blade being located at the open extended position, the lock surface approaches the engage portion gradually to engage with the engage portion. This feature is not disclosed or suggested by any of the references of record. Although claim 6 depends on claim 1 and is considered to be patentably distinct from the prior art of record based on claim 1, claim 6 is further distinguished from the cited references based on the limitations that it introduces.

Claim 18 is new. Claim 18 is supported at least by paragraphs [0021] and [0033] of the publication of this application (US 2005/0044717 A1)). Claim 18 depends indirectly on claim 1 and is considered to be allowable for the reasons given above for the patentability of claim 1. In addition, the features recited by claim 18 are not disclosed or suggested by the prior art of record.

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In view of the foregoing, the applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. A timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

Please charge any unforeseen fees that may be due to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,



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